

Public Hearing Minutes – September 12, 2012
BSA Application # 254-12 BZ – 850 3rd Avenue

Chairman Fred Xuereb officially opened the Public Hearing and introduced Mr. Marvin Schein.

Mr. Schein introduced himself as the developer, along with his partner, as the developer of the FDA building located at 850 3rd Avenue.

Mr. Schein introduced his development team and briefly discussed the need to upgrade the building to the 2008 Building Code. It is currently under 1968 Code. He described the amenities they are adding to the building and the types of manufacturing businesses they are trying to attract. The project should create 1500 to 2000 jobs. He stated the location has great transportation and access.

The variance they are seeking would allow for larger commercial businesses within their complex. They are limited by contract to 15% of the building as retail, about 180,000 square feet. Current zoning (M-3) limits stores to 10,000 square feet. The variance would allow store larger than 10,000 square feet but not more total square footage for the building. They have been approached by Bed, Bath and Beyond looking for larger space for all four of their affiliates. They are also restricted as to what they can do with their façade and cannot changes the entrances/exits. The building will look as it did in 1918, with modern amenities. The retail component will allow them to charge competitive rates for industrial tenants.

He believes this project will have a tremendous, positive impact on 3rd Avenue.

Mr. Xuereb stated that we have the workforce in the community already and cited Opportunities for a Better Tomorrow as one such job training program.

Mr. Ian Seigel, one of the development team members, stated that is a tremendous selling point and he believes 1300 new workers in the area will also help the local economy.

Mr. Xuereb mentioned the recent Financial Times story about Sunset Park.

In response to a question by Beverly Kleinman, Mr. Schein stated the parking lot will have more than 500 spaces and there will be another 150 spaces within the building. The building has more than 20 loading docks, so trucks will not be blocking the street. The building also has 23 automatic elevators. That is also an attractive selling point.

Their goal is to attract Asian manufacturers to create goods for export back to China. Central China does not have the infrastructure to support such manufacturing and consumers like American-made goods.

Mr. Peers stated he's been to the site several times and he is impressed by the team and its dedication to the community. He believes the variance question is an easy one.

There was a discussion on re-opening 29th Street and rehabilitating 32nd Street.

There being no more questions, Mr. Xuereb closed the meeting.